

IRRIGATION PROJECTS IN UMATILLA COUNTY

By L. A. Rosenman, Watermaster

Now that the circuit court decree in the matter of the adjudication of the relative rights of the various claimants to the waters of the Umatilla river and its tributaries has been signed by Judge Phelps a word should be said in regard to this important piece of work. The settlement of the water rights on this river system constitutes probably the largest piece of work of this kind ever attempted in the state of Oregon, and the results are noteworthy as it represents a forward step both in the determination of water rights as well as in the distribution work resulting therefrom.

A maximum amount of water per acre is fixed for the four classes of land defined in the decree and upon the watermaster devolves the task of determining the water duty or need under the maximum. He also must determine under which classification each piece of land comes. Thus it is seen that it has not been attempted to make an iron-clad rule in the amount of water allotted to the land but one that changes to meet conditions.

Its flexibility is its outstanding feature. It definitely fixes the present vested water rights and as conditions change in the future it automatically changes these rights to meet new conditions, and at the same time takes care of future development. It is an inducement to the rancher to improve his irrigation system and yet gives him sufficient time in which to make such improvements so as not to work a hardship upon him. It provides a maximum water delivery which is used during the development period and automatically reduces the water allotment as the land improves under cultivation and as systems of irrigation improve.

Success is often attained through a series of failures, or to put it another way, if a man profits by his mistakes he will eventually master them and become successful. This might well be applied to the development of the irrigation projects in this county, to the government's Hermiton project, the Furnish project and the Western Land and Irrigation Company's project, for they certainly have been subjected to all the experiments and mistakes that could be experienced in project development in this locality. The fact that they now begin to show unmistakable signs of success only emphasizes the enormity of the mistakes made and the lack of knowledge of conditions, for these projects are entirely feasible and practical when the land is handled properly.

Let us contemplate a few of the project troubles and the remedies applied. Now, there is the old question of land values. When water was made available for the sage brush land of the projects most of the land was held in private hands and the owners seeing visions of suddenly acquired wealth, became the wildest of

enthusiasts for rapid development—by somebody else—and peddled their land at prices ranging from \$100 up to \$200 or more, and numbers of innocent easterners bit. Of course, this was an exorbitant price for such land and buyers of such could not so hardly expect to get the money spent on their holdings back again. Some of these purchasers deserve compassion for their gullibility but the majority of these early buyers were simply small investors taking a chance at making a few dollars by rises in land values, for they had no intention of ever making a home for themselves on the projects and even though some of them did develop their land they were working for the unearned increment, which in this case failed to show up.

And this is where the original land owners fell down in their get-rich-quick plans. They should not have angled for this class of investors because ultimately many had to return the land or if in too deep they hung on and howled. A dissatisfied purchaser makes a poor business advertisement and soon the projects had the worst kind of a black eye, so black it had a faint odor to it. When a man's pocket book is hit he begins to do some quick thinking but when it is a case of figuring out how much he will make with certain given conditions his think-tank machinery gets runned up with the oil of well being instead of being lubricated with the sweat of honest toil and it takes him longer to figure out "was he los'." Hence it has taken several years for those with land to dispose of on the projects to determine that land values were too high and must come down a peg. But down it has come at last; inflated values are a thing of the past, and now first class land can

be bought for \$25 to \$75 per acre. This does not include water rights which cost around \$70 per acre on long-time payments and either at a low rate of interest on the two Carey Act projects or no interest charges as with the government project.

Linked with high land prices as the two worst evils of project development was the lack of knowledge of development procedure. They would mob a man down there now for some of the experiments or mistakes made in the past. For instance, a man with 40 acres to reclaim could proceed to clear off the brush and pile it and burn it. Then he would plow up his cleaned off land real nicely. To the untitled let me whisper that this is one awful crime, for soon a wind storm would hit that particular territory and the top six or seven inches of soil, the most valuable, would be wafted to the leeward ranches and cover up some hard working rancher's young alfalfa stand or strawberry patch, or make large glistening dunes of sand in a young apple orchard. That used to be a regular occurrence and then the owner of said cleared forty would

5. Then seed to rye and alfalfa.
6. Then note that a wind storm is threatening. (Sand storms are apt to occur here any day in the year.)
7. Then begin to wonder where necessary flood boxes, ditches, etc., are to be placed to irrigate the land.

8. Then watch the wind begin to whip away top soil, seed and all.

9. Then frantically slap in a number of poorly constructed irrigation ditches, without drains or other necessary accessories, in your haste to check damage from the winds.

10. Then begin to irrigate it after a fashion, wildly endeavoring to wet the knolls and hummocks while the depressions are being eroded with gullies. (Strange but until now you had thought this job of irrigation comparatively easy and worthy of only minor consideration.) The land had not been properly shaped to get the water to every part of it in a reasonable length of time. Besides the ditches are too small and inadequate and fill rapidly with blowing sand.

11. By this time you note that your top soil and seed have blown away or if perchance any plants have appeared their roots are waxing gaily in the breeze.

12. The season is near its close. You have spent valuable time, labor and money and have nothing to show for it. Your misdirected enthusiasm disappears.

13. In disgust you leave the country and ever after curse it.

Close adherence to the following rules bring quick returns:

1. First, study the land and decide where ditches, flumes and accessories are to be placed to get water to every part of the tract. The location of these should be staked or marked out by the aid of proper surveys.
2. Then construct the main supply ditch or flume from the measuring wler to the smoothest land where operations are to be begun first, protecting the banks from wind action with brush or straw covering after seeding same to rye. Contour or head ditches may be extended from time to time as clearing and grading progresses.
3. Then make up a number of flood boxes for the gentle slopes and lath boxes for the steepest slopes.
4. Then select an acre strip at the southwest side of your smoothest

land. Clear off the brush from this but do not burn it. Make it aside into piles temporarily.

5. On the gentle slopes—(a) grade between contour or head ditches into strips 30 to 50 ft. wide, level transversely but with the natural slope of the land lengthwise. Low permanent levees between the strips over which a mower may easily pass, are made quickly by means of a ridger. (b) Then irrigate the strips by flooding from suitable flood boxes placed in the banks of the head ditch. (c) Then seed immediately to rye (30 to 40 lbs. per acre) over levees and all. (d) Then cover lath banks and levees with brush temporarily.

6. On only the very steepest slopes—(a) Grade by use of Fresno and leveler to produce a uniformly smooth surface. (b) Parallel the head ditch with a smaller sub-ditch to which water is supplied through suitable turnouts. In the lower bank of the sub ditch place lath boxes, one for each corrugation or furrow. (c) Seed to rye (30 to 40 lbs. per acre. (d) Then corrugate with furrows 1.5 to 2 ft. apart, a lath box being placed at the upper end of each furrow. (e) Then irrigate immediately.

7. Then having cleared, graded, seeded and irrigated one small piece in this way, repeat the process with another acre strip, then another and another as rapidly as possible until the whole tract is thus prepared. In the meantime, however, observing care to keep the surface soil sufficiently moist by frequent irrigation to prevent blowing until the rye plants form a protective covering.

8. Then remove the brush previously piled upon the ditch banks and levees and burn it.

9. As rapidly as the rye attains a height of 4 inches disk drill in the alfalfa (8 to 12 lbs. per acre) immediately after an irrigation.

10. Tend the young alfalfa plants carefully, never allowing them to suffer for lack of moisture.

By observing these simple rules alfalfa may be seeded any time from March 15 to September 15 and good results will follow.

This Mr. Jones, by the way, is doing mighty satisfactory work down that way. His services are free to the farmers on the project for the asking and he lines out their ditches for them, shows how to construct water boxes, gives levels for grading up their land and also much good helpful advice. Although his work is confined to the government project the affects are felt on both the others and failures in land reclamation are becoming scarce.

Just consider the use of water for a minute. The idea a year or two ago used to be to get all the water possible and pour it over the land, more with the idea of getting a larger amount than the other fellow than of the beneficial results to be obtained. Now, they are beginning to realize that what helps the other fellow also helps them and conservation of water through improved methods of use and delivery are being talked and put in practice.

The case of the Furnish project is illuminating. A year ago the crudest method of water delivery was practiced. A ditch walker regulated the amount of water received by each rancher and he seemingly used his own judgment as to how much to raise the gates, for there were no measuring devices installed nor were there systems of rotation. A man received water in a steady flow as long as the water lasted. You can imagine that much discontent was manifested amongst the water-users and a large part of the water supplied was wasted. This season systems of rotation in the use of water were worked out amongst the older ranchers and crude methods of water measurement were used. For the most part the ranchers were privileged to arrange the schedules amongst themselves. There were some reluctant to make the change but all were more than satisfied after giving it a trial and the company is planning on enlarging this rotation scheme before another year and to install good measuring devices throughout their entire distribution system.

You have no conception of the benefit this one change is and will be to this project. In the first place it gives the rancher time to do something besides irrigate; it tends to increase production of crops by a more even distribution of water over the ranch; it minimizes the danger of over irrigation and lastly it saves water. This means not only a saving of water for somebody else but for all concerned as the summer supply for this project comes from stored water and so if all help save in the use



"Uncle Dick" Warinner.

THE BUCKAROO

Reprinted from Pacific Laundryman.

By Richard Carter Warinner

Tighten the cinch and take off the blind
Let 'er buck in front, let 'er buck behind,
We'll both go up and come down together,
But I hope to die if I'll "pull leather."

Oh, I live the life of a buckaroo,
And I love the scream of the wild curlew,
And the coyote's howl is music to me,
As I gaze on the stars in the milky way.

Awaiting the dawn of another day,
As I lie alone, alone, did I say?
No! my broncho's with me, my cayuse pet,
And he's tethered to me with a lariat.

Our Teddy was once a buckaroo,
And he could handle a lasso, too;
He loved the scent of the wild sage-brush,
He loved the silence he loved the hush.

Of the boundless range, where the cattle roam,
His pony his pal, his saddle his home,
He gathered an inspiration there,
Which led to the presidential chair.

I never expect such great renown,
But I may be marshaled of some cow town,
Or sheriff, or judge, or something like that,
And choke some guy with my lariat.

My chaps are worn, and my hair is long,
And I'm humming all day some dear old song,
Some dear old song which my mother sang,
Before I learned all this cow-boy slang.

Before I knew of the wild, wild west,
And I'm thinking of her whom I loved best,
And I'm wondering should I go home again
If she'd welcome a cow-boy of the plain?

But I must tighten my latigo
For I'm off with the morning's first faint glow,
Over the sage-brush plains I ride,
Like a buccaneer on a rising tide.

With new sombrero and silver spurs
I'll search the heard for stray "slick-ears."
For I'm off to the Round-Up, sure, this Fall—
My broncho and I. Say, I've got the gall.

To ride with any old buckaroo,
And to show 'em a trick with a lasso, too,
I'm not much good at that "bulldog's" stunt,
But I'll show 'em a pace at a maverick hunt.

'Mongst them beautiful Eastern Oregon girls,
I'll show 'em a trick! how my lasso twirls
Straight out from the heart of a cow-boy true,
They'll go some, if the beat this buckaroo.

Then tighten the cinch, take off the blind,
Let 'er buck in front, let 'er buck behind,
For neither of us 'll show the "white feather,"
But I hope to die if I pull leather.

Dedicated to John F. Robinson, president of the Pendleton Commercial Club.

We reprint this poem in response to a general demand for copies of it among the friends of the author and man to whom it was dedicated.



Jack Robinson



This map of Umatilla county shows its diverse resources, including its irrigation districts.

enthusiasts for rapid development—by somebody else—and peddled their land at prices ranging from \$100 up to \$200 or more, and numbers of innocent easterners bit. Of course, this was an exorbitant price for such land and buyers of such could not so hardly expect to get the money spent on their holdings back again. Some of these purchasers deserve compassion for their gullibility but the majority of these early buyers were simply small investors taking a chance at making a few dollars by rises in land values, for they had no intention of ever making a home for themselves on the projects and even though some of them did develop their land they were working for the unearned increment, which in this case failed to show up.

And this is where the original land owners fell down in their get-rich-quick plans. They should not have angled for this class of investors because ultimately many had to return the land or if in too deep they hung on and howled. A dissatisfied purchaser makes a poor business advertisement and soon the projects had the worst kind of a black eye, so black it had a faint odor to it. When a man's pocket book is hit he begins to do some quick thinking but when it is a case of figuring out how much he will make with certain given conditions his think-tank machinery gets runned up with the oil of well being instead of being lubricated with the sweat of honest toil and it takes him longer to figure out "was he los'." Hence it has taken several years for those with land to dispose of on the projects to determine that land values were too high and must come down a peg. But down it has come at last; inflated values are a thing of the past, and now first class land can

be bought for \$25 to \$75 per acre. This does not include water rights which cost around \$70 per acre on long-time payments and either at a low rate of interest on the two Carey Act projects or no interest charges as with the government project.

Linked with high land prices as the two worst evils of project development was the lack of knowledge of development procedure. They would mob a man down there now for some of the experiments or mistakes made in the past. For instance, a man with 40 acres to reclaim could proceed to clear off the brush and pile it and burn it. Then he would plow up his cleaned off land real nicely. To the untitled let me whisper that this is one awful crime, for soon a wind storm would hit that particular territory and the top six or seven inches of soil, the most valuable, would be wafted to the leeward ranches and cover up some hard working rancher's young alfalfa stand or strawberry patch, or make large glistening dunes of sand in a young apple orchard. That used to be a regular occurrence and then the owner of said cleared forty would

enthusiasts for rapid development—by somebody else—and peddled their land at prices ranging from \$100 up to \$200 or more, and numbers of innocent easterners bit. Of course, this was an exorbitant price for such land and buyers of such could not so hardly expect to get the money spent on their holdings back again. Some of these purchasers deserve compassion for their gullibility but the majority of these early buyers were simply small investors taking a chance at making a few dollars by rises in land values, for they had no intention of ever making a home for themselves on the projects and even though some of them did develop their land they were working for the unearned increment, which in this case failed to show up.

And this is where the original land owners fell down in their get-rich-quick plans. They should not have angled for this class of investors because ultimately many had to return the land or if in too deep they hung on and howled. A dissatisfied purchaser makes a poor business advertisement and soon the projects had the worst kind of a black eye, so black it had a faint odor to it. When a man's pocket book is hit he begins to do some quick thinking but when it is a case of figuring out how much he will make with certain given conditions his think-tank machinery gets runned up with the oil of well being instead of being lubricated with the sweat of honest toil and it takes him longer to figure out "was he los'." Hence it has taken several years for those with land to dispose of on the projects to determine that land values were too high and must come down a peg. But down it has come at last; inflated values are a thing of the past, and now first class land can

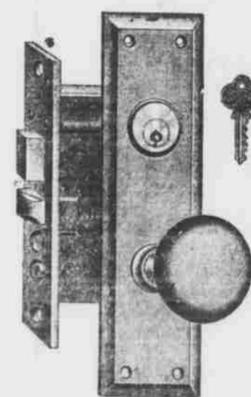
be bought for \$25 to \$75 per acre. This does not include water rights which cost around \$70 per acre on long-time payments and either at a low rate of interest on the two Carey Act projects or no interest charges as with the government project.

Linked with high land prices as the two worst evils of project development was the lack of knowledge of development procedure. They would mob a man down there now for some of the experiments or mistakes made in the past. For instance, a man with 40 acres to reclaim could proceed to clear off the brush and pile it and burn it. Then he would plow up his cleaned off land real nicely. To the untitled let me whisper that this is one awful crime, for soon a wind storm would hit that particular territory and the top six or seven inches of soil, the most valuable, would be wafted to the leeward ranches and cover up some hard working rancher's young alfalfa stand or strawberry patch, or make large glistening dunes of sand in a young apple orchard. That used to be a regular occurrence and then the owner of said cleared forty would

enthusiasts for rapid development—by somebody else—and peddled their land at prices ranging from \$100 up to \$200 or more, and numbers of innocent easterners bit. Of course, this was an exorbitant price for such land and buyers of such could not so hardly expect to get the money spent on their holdings back again. Some of these purchasers deserve compassion for their gullibility but the majority of these early buyers were simply small investors taking a chance at making a few dollars by rises in land values, for they had no intention of ever making a home for themselves on the projects and even though some of them did develop their land they were working for the unearned increment, which in this case failed to show up.

And this is where the original land owners fell down in their get-rich-quick plans. They should not have angled for this class of investors because ultimately many had to return the land or if in too deep they hung on and howled. A dissatisfied purchaser makes a poor business advertisement and soon the projects had the worst kind of a black eye, so black it had a faint odor to it. When a man's pocket book is hit he begins to do some quick thinking but when it is a case of figuring out how much he will make with certain given conditions his think-tank machinery gets runned up with the oil of well being instead of being lubricated with the sweat of honest toil and it takes him longer to figure out "was he los'." Hence it has taken several years for those with land to dispose of on the projects to determine that land values were too high and must come down a peg. But down it has come at last; inflated values are a thing of the past, and now first class land can

(Continued on Page 19.)



Are You Going to Build?

If so it will pay you to consult us about your finish hardware. P. & F. Corbin has been the standard for years. We are always pleased to show you our line and quote you prices. Corbin locks denote individuality and insure safety.

After the house is completed let us fit you out with a

Universal Range and Heater

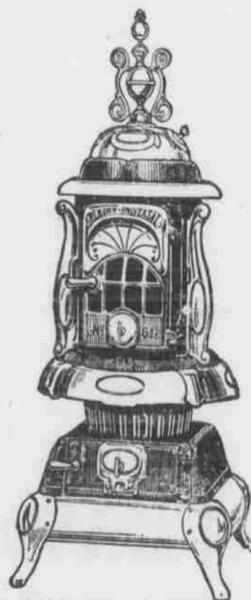
or Hot Air Furnace

Universal Stoves and Ranges

have been universally used for cooking and heating for forty years

Geo. C. Baer & Co.

Shelf and Heavy Hardware



RENOWN UNIVERSAL